R 4140 - 1F 11/87

U.S. House of Representatives

1987 JOB DESCRIPTION, SALARY AND STAFF BENEFITS SURVEY

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Made possible by grants from

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A Congressional Management Foundation Guidebook

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Printed in the United States of America
ISSN No. 0885-8470

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How to Make Sensible Use of This Report

This report isn't meant to be the final word in setting staff salaries or benefits. We hope that neither Members nor staff interpret it as such.

The report is simply a useful grouping of information on current practices to help offices that are reviewing their salary structures and personnel policies.

Neither individual staff nor individual offices can be fit into a uniform mold. Some offices may be locked into high district office rent or costly computer systems which reduce their flexibility regarding salaries. In other offices, veteran staffers may receive what appears to be inordinate compensation for their job descriptions, yet be worth every dime of this salary because of their proven loyalty and the trust the Member places in their political acumen. Also, the amount of Hill experience or other attributes staffers bring to their positions is not reflected in the averages.

It is inappropriate to consider a divergence form the norm as "wrong." It is, however, an occasion to ask "why?" This may lead to the conclusion that a review of management assumptions and practices is warranted. If it does, we hope the data we provide assists you in your efforts.

Acknowledgments

235 House offices took the time to respond to our extensive questionnaire on which this report is based. Our first thanks goes to them and to the Administrative Assistants Association Board of Directors who encouraged their participation.

Our next thanks must go to the project sponsors who made it possible to produce a report that is greatly enhanced over previous efforts. We thank these firms for their commitment to providing congressional offices with better management tools:

BellSouth
Micro Research

Finally, we must thank the small army of volunteers who contributed their valuable time. The new features presented in this report would not have been possible without the computer expertise of Kathy Aterno and David Bristol. Even more fundamentally, the data would never have been collected, organized, verified, input or tabulated without the help of Brad Kagan, Diana Morrow, Darlene Thomas, Jon Tresan, and Nicole Yakatan. We must also thank Karen Balter for her comparative research of the private sector and the federal agencies.

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Introduction

Most congressional offices have come to refer to the Congressional Management Foundation's (CMF) Job Description and Salary Survey when reviewing salary levels for new or existing staff. This year's report offers many new features which Members, A.A.'s and other staff using it should be aware of.

New Features

* The most important and useful innovation is reporting the average salary level for a given position correlated to the number of years in that position. Offices have asked for this information for several years and we are very pleased to now be able to provide it.

We must caution that this information reflects the number of years in that particular position in that particular office. Regrettably, the complexity of capturing other relevant information such as number of years in that position in another office, or numbers of years in another position in the current office, preclude providing additional desirable information. Nevertheless, we are confident offices will find this new feature of immense benefit in trying to achieve equity in salary structures.

* In addition to providing salary information correlated to the staffer's tenure in that position, we are also providing a chart of the average salary for a given position based on the tenure of the office itself. The survey finds that, particularly for professional positions, Members who have served more terms tend to pay more to staff in those positions. This can be factored in when trying to establish salary ranges for your particular office.

* Another new feature that you will find of great benefit is the correlation of district office salaries to district demography, i.e., rural, urban, suburban, or mixed. The cost of living for an urban caseworker, for example, can be greater than the cost for a rural caseworker. Salary policies need to reflect this and the new information we provide will help you to see that they do.

* We have also broken out, for the first time, part-time staff salaries for the few positions in which part-time staff are commonly employed (Computer Operator, Caseworker, District Aide). This will provide a useful guideline for offices who are attempting to ease overloaded functions with part-time assistance.

* While the "Staff Benefits" section is not brand new (we first included it in our last survey in 1985), we have some indications that not all offices noticed

it then as it was tucked away in the back of the report. We want to clearly draw your attention to this section as it provides invaluable information on subjects of universal importance to your staff such as COLA's, merit-pay, vacation policy, and sick leave policy, and less commonly needed policies for maternity and paternity leaves. One all-new feature in this section covers policies on amount of vacation time accrual allowed in offices which permit accrual to the following year.

* This report also captures some fascinating and useful information on staffing patterns not previously available. One such feature is the chart in the next section on the percentage of staff located in the district office(s) correlated to the overall numbers of full-time staff working for the Member. This can be useful in evaluating your own office's staffing patterns when considering future changes.

* Another entirely new piece of staffing pattern information displayed in this report is the average length of time of staff in their position. In some positions the turnover borders on the alarming and argues greatly for hiring practices which screen out "job-hoppers" who take the position merely as a stepping stone; even more importantly, the generally high turnover across all positions argues for an institutional commitment to training mechanisms for new staff. However shocking the "average tenure" figures seem, they are in fact actually worse in that our report does not capture information on the turnover of new staff <u>within</u> their first year.

Overall, this report gives us a telling snap-shot of the stresses under which congressional offices work. We see a picture of reduced numbers of personnel in the Gramm-Rudman era, salary levels generally and sometimes considerably lower than the private sector, and high personnel turnover, particularly at the "lower" levels of the organization. Balancing this, we see often generous benefits policies (such as for vacation time and maternity leave) reflecting the close camaraderie and personal care which often exist in the family-like atmosphere of many congressional offices.

We hope that the extensive, pragmatic information provided in this report assists Members and their key aides to expeditiously and effectively analyze staffing patterns and compensation policies, and to develop the best policies attainable for their own offices. If these policies then contribute to even small improvements in productivity and morale and reduction in turnover, we will feel that our contribution has been of value.

JOB DESCRIPTION AND SALARY SURVEY

SUMMARY
1987

CMF JOB DESCRIPTION AND SALARY SURVEY RESULTS
U. S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Total number of offices responding: 235 or 54% of the House of Representatives; 226 responses were received before the cut-off date for tabulation purposes. Computations are based on 226 surveys.

Analysis of responding offices:
Number of Republican offices: 130
Number of Democratic offices: 95

This 58% to 42% ratio of Democrats to Republicans closely parallels the parties' actual ratios in the House, which are 59% to 41%. One office did not disclose party affiliation.

The average salary across all positions for House staff was $26,118 up from $24,132 in 1985 -- an increase of 8.2% over two years. In comparison, white collar workers in the private sector enjoyed a 4.1% pay increase from 1986-1987.[1] The Hill average is considerably below that of the average federal worker which is $31,011.[2] It should be noted that 1986 civilian federal salaries lagged nearly 20% behind the private sector;[3] House salaries obviously lag even further behind these. Given the average young age of congressional staff found in past studies,[4] it is possible that a comparative demographic study could find this significantly lower than their counterparts in the federal agencies or private sector, justifying the salary differential. It is also possible that these lower salaries significantly contribute to the high turnover which denies congressional offices experienced staff in many positions.

The average number of staff per office dropped from 15.5 in 1985 to 14.3 this year. In the face of 1986 reductions in clerk-hire allowances, congressional offices abolished positions or chose not to rehire when attrition occurred, spreading the unused salary among the remaining staff. When clerk-hire allowances were restored to previous levels in 1987 and amended upward by a COLA, offices appear to have used this added wealth to increase staff compensation rather than to hire additional staff. Although the staff losses were relatively small, they may point toward a future trend. Of the nine positions (almost half) in which staff numbers diminished, the greatest reductions were shown in District Aides, District Caseworkers, Legislative Correspondents and Computer Operators. On the other hand, there was a significant increase in the number of Legislative Assistants and a small increase in the number of Systems Managers. Overall, it appears the historical trend of increased numbers of personal office staff, which had already leveled in recent years, is now reversing. In the age of budget

deficits, it is unlikely to resume growth for the next decade despite the increasing size of constituencies due to population increase. Improvements in legislative research, constituent dialogue and constituent advocacy (casework) will have to be achieved through greater efficiencies, not additional personnel.

The percentage of staff located in the home district increases in proportion to the overall number of full-time staff (see following chart). The cause for this may simply be the extreme limitation on space in the Washington office, but also probably correlates to the Member's political concerns and desire for more visibility back home. Overall, the percentage of staff working in the home district is somewhat lower than recent years (36.6% in 1983). This may be directly correlated to Gramm-Rudman cutbacks in 1986 when some congressional offices were forced to close satellites of their main district office.

Staffing Patterns
Full-Time Staff Members

Number of Staff	Number of Offices	Percentage Working in the Home District
11	30	23%
12	26	23%
13	25	29%
14	41	30%
15	48	31%
16	35	32%
17	15	32%
18	2	44%

The average tenure in major Hill positions ranges from a high of 5.5 years for A.A.'s to a low of 1.7 years for receptionists. (The actual extremes belong to groups which are too small to be statistically significant---Mobile Office Operators at 6.8 years and Research Assistant at 1.3 years.) These figures belie the actual extent of turnover among staff with less than two years tenure as a small cadre of Hill veterans with 10 or 15 years of service weight the figures upwards. In the body of this report, there are figures for the percentage of staff who have been in their current position one year or less which include startling statistics such as 41% for L.A.'s, 71% for L.C.'s and 73% for receptionists. The following chart summarizes the average tenure for each position.

AVERAGE TENURE BY POSITION

Administrative Assistant	5.5
Chief Legis. Asst./Leg. Dir.	4.1
Legislative Assistant	2.5
Legislative Correspondent	1.7
Executive Personal Secretary	4.9
Office Manager	4.9
Receptionist	1.7
Press Secretary	2.8
Research Assistant	1.3
Systems/Mail Manager	3.1
Computer Operator	3.2
Federal Grants/Project Coord.	4.0
Caseworker (Washington)	5.1
Caseworker (District)	4.0
Office Sec'y./Clerk (Washington)	3.9
Office Sec'y./Clerk (District)	3.4
Appointments Secretary	4.8
Field Director	5.3
District Aide	3.9
Mobile Office Operator	6.8

High and Low Salaries

There always seems to be a great deal of attention paid to who earns the least and the most on the Hill. To satisfy this curiosity we offer the following section:

To no one's surprise, the highest salaries were paid most frequently to Administrative Assistants.

-- 11 A.A.'s (4.7%) earned the limit of $72,500 (compared to 8.6% of our sample in 1985 who earned last year's ceiling of $ 68,700).

-- 80.5% of all A.A.'s in our sample earned over $45,000, compared to last year's 70.5%.

-- The average salary earned by A.A.'s was $55,140.

Lowest average salaries were earned by District Office Secretaries: $15,620/year. While they also held the lowest average last year at $15,329, they showed an increase of 2% this year.

If one were to seek a Hill job purely on monetary grounds and without any reference to ideology (we suppose there must be someone like that around), our survey shows that the best opportunity would be to become an Administrative Assistant for a Republican Member representing a rural district (average $57,407 per year). This is unchanged from the best-paid status of rural Republican A.A.'s in the 1985 survey results.

AVERAGE AA SALARIES BY PARTY AND BY TYPE OF DISTRICT

Type of District	Republicans 1985	Republicans 1987	Democrats 1985	Democrats 1987
Rural	55,889	57,407	53,037	53,343
Urban	50,400	49,000	50,487	55,632
Suburban	48,809	56,000	53,214	53,500
Mixed	51,140	54,676	52,659	56,691

Among the lowest paid staffers -- District Office Secretaries -- urban Democratic offices were the most generous, while rural Republican Members pinched the most pennies.

AVERAGE SALARIES FOR DISTRICT OFFICE SECRETARIES BY PARTY AND BY TYPE OF DISTRICT

Type of District	Republicans 1985	Republicans 1987	Democrats 1985	Democrats 1987
Rural	14,545	14,111	16,667	15,546
Urban	17,000	17,000	15,263	17,435
Suburban	17,778	16,438	15,333	16,273
Mixed	14,828	15,378	15,027	14,345

Most dramatically improved financial positions on a House staff:

--Executive Personal Secretaries: Average salary up by 25.9% since 1985. (These staffers had experienced an 11.8% drop between 1984 and 1985).

--District Aides: Up since 1985, 18.9%.

--Systems Manager: Up 15.3% since 1985. Computer Operators salaries up 8.9%.

--Two nearly extinct positions on the Hill--Research Assistants and Mobile Office Operators--both received substantial salary increases. Salaries for Research Assistants, after experiencing a 9.4% decrease in 1985, rose 15.1%, and Mobile

Office Operators' rocketed 28.0%. Neither of these groups, however, is large enough for the swings to be statistically significant.

Most dramatically worsened financial positions:

--Office Managers: Salaries decreased 5.2% from 1985 to $25,900 in 1987.

Since most office managers are directly involved in office budgeting and accounting, we assume that the drop in salary is accounted for by turnover rather than self-imposed cutbacks. Over 40% of office managers reporting assumed their position since that last survey was conducted, clearly at somewhat lower salaries than their predecessors.

In the following chart you will see at a glance the high, low and average salary for each position as well as the normal-range for each position. In the chart after this you will see the average salary for each position correlated to the numbers of years the Member has served in Congress, which will give low and high averages based on Member-tenure.

1987 CONGRESSIONAL MANAGEMENT FOUNDATION JOB DESCRIPTION / SALARY SURVEY October 1987

POSITION	TOTAL RESPONSES	FULL TIME	PART TIME	LOW SALARY	HIGH SALARY*	AVERAGE SALARY	NORMAL RANGE**	AVERAGE PERCENT CHANGE SINCE '85
Administrative Assistant	236	236	0	25	72.5	55	43 - 70	6.0%
Chief Legis. Asst./Legis. Dir.	174	174	0	20	72.5	37	27 - 48	4.4%
Legislative Assistant	500	495	5	14+	60	24	17 - 32	5.6%
Legislative Correspondent	121	119	2	12	35	18	15 - 23	8.6%
Executive/Personal Secretary	190	189	1	14	60	28	20 - 38	25.9%
Office Manager	81	77	4	15	45	26	17 - 35	-5.2%
Receptionist	191	189	2	12	32	17	14 - 20	5.2%
Press Secretary	176	170	6	16	71	29	20 - 37	4.3%
Research Assistant	15	12	3	12	45	19	12 - 18	15.1%
Systems/Mail Manager	110	108	2	14	36	21	16 - 26	15.4%
Computer Operator	60	52	8	12	30	19	12 - 24	8.9%
Federal Grants/Project Coord.	50	46	4	16	40	24	17 - 34	6.6%
Caseworker (Washington)	54	52	2	14	34	25	17 - 32	3.4%
Caseworker (District)	559	521	38	7	45	19	14 - 25	6.8%
Office Sec'y./Clerk (Washington)	36	33	3	5	30	18	10 - 25	3.8%
Office Sec'y./Clerk (District)	167	157	10	8	28	16	10 - 20	1.9%
Appointments Secretary	54	50	4	15	56	24	15 - 30	9.6%
District Rep/Field Director	191	191	0	18	68	36	25 - 50	8.5%
District Aide	245	213	32	8	48	23	12 - 30	18.9%
Mobile Office Operator	14	14	0	12	42	22	12 - 31	28.0%

NOTE: All salary figures in thousands.

* HIGH SALARY - These figures do not include staff who work for leadership offices and who fall under special statutory salary provisions.

** NORMAL RANGE - Salary range after eliminating the top 10% & bottom 10% of salaries reported for position.

\+ One office reported paying a low salary of $1000 to a congressional fellow.

1987 CONGRESSIONAL MANAGEMENT FOUNDATION JOB DESCRIPTION / SALARY SURVEY October 1987

AVERAGE SALARIES BY MEMBER'S TERM IN OFFICE

POSITION	1 TERM	2 TERMS	3 TERMS	4 TERMS	*5-6 TERMS	7+ TERMS
Administrative Assistant	53.1	52.2	55.1	56.7	55.1	55.6
Chief Legis. Asst./Legis. Dir.	35.8	34.8	34.4	36.8	38.9	38.1
Legislative Assistant	22.5	22.4	23.6	23.1	24.9	25.5
Legislative Correspondent	17.4	17.3	16.9	19.2	17.4	19.8
Executive/Personal Secretary	26.3	26.5	27.1	29.0	26.8	32.4
Office Manager	25.0	22.1	23.1	26.9	25.0	30.1
Receptionist	15.8	16.3	17.0	16.0	17.5	17.3
Press Secretary	28.2	27.0	28.6	26.3	27.8	33.6
Research Assistant	--	15.5	16.0	--	16.3	17.6
Systems/Mail Manager	20.6	20.4	19.7	20.3	22.0	20.4
Computer Operator	14.5	18.1	20.9	17.0	17.8	16.9
Federal Grants/Project Coord.	25.0	23.1	24.0	19.3	24.4	32.3
Caseworker (Washington)	21.8	23.5	24.2	30.3	23.8	25.5
Caseworker (District)	18.3	18.7	18.2	19.0	20.0	20.2
Office Sec'y./Clerk (Washington)	13.3	23.5	20.7	11.0	15.7	19.4
Office Sec'y./Clerk (District)	13.5	16.0	14.9	14.7	16.2	16.0
Appointments Secretary	16.1	22.5	24.1	20.1	22.5	29.7
Field Director	33.3	33.9	33.8	36.0	37.7	39.1
District Aide	19.0	19.7	20.1	19.3	22.6	25.4
Mobile Office Operator	27.0	22.5	--	28.0	23.5	16.3

NOTE: All salary figures in thousands.

* Figures for five and six term offices were combined to create significant sample sizes.

SALARY LEVELS BY JOB DESCRIPTION
1987

Washington Office

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT / EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT -- top staff person responsible for overall office functions, supervision of projects, district and Hill politics and personnel.

Low: $25,000 High: $72,500 Average: $55,140 Normal Range*: $43,000 - $70,000

Years of Service**	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1 *	$50,900	48	20.3%
2 - 3 **	$52,000	54	22.9%
4 - 5	$55,000	44	18.6%
6+	$59,300	88	37.3%

Average Number of Years: 5.5

* Normal range is defined as the range in which 80% of the staff in that position fall, once the lower and upper 10% have been discounted.

** Wherever "Years of Service" is reported, we are referring only to years of service in that position and that particular office.

* "One year" includes staff who have been in the position less than one year.

** In an effort to create significant sample sizes, we have combined years of service when necessary.

Fourteen offices reported two A.A.'s (typically, one in Washington, one at home). Virtually all congressional offices report employing AA's, accounting for 236 responses from 226 offices, or 104.4% of the sample. In some instances, the responsibilities of the A.A. are combined with those of the Legislative Director, Press Secretary, Federal Grants/Project Director, Field Director or District Aide. Behind Mobile Office Operators, A.A.'s enjoy the longest tenure on the Hill, averaging 5.5 years. The high salary of $72,500 is the maximum an Executive Level 5 employee is allowed to earn per annum.

CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT / LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR -- Directs the legislative staff or serves as resource person for other LA's. Responsible for prep. work for hearings, legislative proposals, general issues oversight and initiatives, floor work, legislative mail, etc.

Low: $20,000 High: $72,500 Average: $36,600 Normal Range: $27,000 - $48,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$34,100	41	23.6%
2	$33,400	27	15.5%
3	$35,000	30	17.2%
4 - 5	$36,000	30	17.2%
6+	$42,600	45	25.9%

Average number of years: 4.1

77% of our sample reported hiring a Chief Legislative Assistant/Legislative Director. Over half (60.4%) of the Legislative Directors earn over $35,000 per year and have three or more years experience in that position. Chief L.A.'s salaries increased 4.4% since 1985. The "normal range" for Chief L.A.'s is second only to the A.A.'s, slightly exceeding that of the Field Directors. As the cost of living for Field Directors is usually lower, these two positions run neck and neck for second place in terms of compensation. Only two offices reported employing two L.D.'s or Chief L.A.'s.

LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT -- Works under the direction of the Chief L.A. or A.A. and is usually responsible for specific issue or committee areas.

Low: $14,000 High: $60,000 Average: $23,800 Normal Range: $17,000 - 32,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$21,200	207	41.4%
2	$22,800	126	25.2%
3	$24,500	59	11.8%
4	$27,900	37	7.4%
5	$29,900	22	4.4%
6+	$31,300	43	8.6%

Average Number of Years: 2.5

221.2% of our sample reported this position (500 L.A.'s in 226 offices) or an average of 2.2 L.A.'s per office. Turnover in these positions is fairly high, the average tenure being only 2.5 years. Salaries for L.A.'s grow steadily from $21,200 for one year's experience to $31,300 after six years. However, this salary is often considerably lower than these professionals could make in comparable positions on committees, in the Senate or in the private sector. This salary inequity and the very demanding nature of the position which, among other things, bears the brunt of the incessant mail load, probably contributes to the high turnover. Overall, L.A.'s enjoyed a 5.6% salary increase from 1985. 23 offices reported employing four LA's with an average salary of $23,600, which is in tune with the overall average; only three offices reported employing more than four LA's, and there are indications that some of these LA's are paid by the committee, not from the offices' clerk-hire accounts. LA responsibilities were reported as combined (although infrequently) with Press Secretary, Systems Manager, Computer Operator, or Federal Grants/Project Coordinator responsibilities.

LEGISLATIVE CORRESPONDENT -- Responsible for answering legislative correspondence from constituents.

Low: $12,000 High: $35,000 Average: $18,000 Normal Range: $15,000 - $23,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$16,700	86	71.1%
2	$19,900	19	15.7%
3 - 5	$19,900	8	6.1%
6+	$25,400	7	5.8%

Average number years: 1.7

53.5% of our sample employed a Legislative Correspondent, down from 66% in 1985. As demonstrated in our 1985 survey, the trend appears to be that instead of adding L.C.'s to cope with increasing mail load, most offices are adding L.A.'s who also answer mail. Despite the drop in the numbers, L.C.'s enjoyed an 8.6% salary increase since 1985. Undoubtedly, some L.C.'s moved up to become L.A.'s in their own right, with commensurate financial rewards. The average number of years in this position is 1.76 -- a staggering 86.7% of all LA's have two or less years experience. It is clearly very difficult to keep individuals who are usually educated, bright, underpaid and upwardly mobile, in this position.

EXECUTIVE / PERSONAL SECRETARY -- Handles the individual needs of the Member including files, correspondence, travel arrangements, bookkeeping and assorted personal tasks and errands. May include scheduling and/or office accounting.

Low: $14,000 High: $60,000 Average: $28,300 Normal Range: $20,000 - $38,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$22,900	50	26.3%
2	$24,600	20	10.5%
3	$27,900	28	14.7%
4	$29,600	21	11.0%
5	$31,300	15	7.9%
6+	$33,100	56	29.5%

Average number years: 4.9

84% of all offices surveyed designated a staffer as Executive/Personal Secretary. Average salaries jumped 25.9% from 1985 figures, which in turn had showed an 11.8% drop from 1984. Clearly, that earlier drop was more than made up for in the following two years. As observed in the 1985 survey, Members still find this position popular and the turnover is considerably lower than in many other Hill positions. The highest paid are Executive/Personal Secretaries with over six years experience, averaging $33,100. (One of the two who earned the $60,000 high salary has 25 years experience!) Interestingly enough, almost as many Executive/Personal Secretaries have six or more years experience (29.5%) as have one year experience (26.3%). The average number of years is 4.9, which is rather high for Hill staff. This speaks to the often close personal loyalty that exists between a Member and the Personal Secretary. 32 offices combine these duties with those of Office Manager; seven with Appointment Secretary/Scheduler; 11 do all three jobs.

OFFICE MANAGER -- Nuts and bolts office administration which may include monitoring mail flow, office accounts, personnel administration, equipment, furniture, supplies and the filing system.

Low: $15,000 High: $45,000 Average: $25,900 Normal Range: $17,000 - $35,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$20,600	20	24.7%
2	$20,600	15	18.5%
3 - 5	$26,400	20	24.7%
6+	$30,600	25	30.9%

Average number years: 4.9

Surprisingly, only 35.9% of offices designate a staffer as Office Manager, down from 41.3% in 1985. However, as previously noted, many offices reported that office management responsibilities were handled by Executive/Personal Secretaries or occasionally by someone else such as the A.A. The Office Manger's position is the only one to experience a reduction in pay--the average salary dropped 5.2%, from $27,300 to $25,900, since 1985. Office Managers with 1-2 years experience (43.2%) make the same average salary; an appreciable raise in the average salaries in the 3-5 year range exists, but differences within that range are negligible. There is relatively little turnover among Office Managers (the average number of years is 4.9) but if a decline in numbers manifests when the next survey is conducted, it may be that offices are choosing to combine these duties with other job descriptions than re-hire when there are vacancies.

RECEPTIONIST -- Front desk assignment -- usually acts as chief visitor-greeter and phone-answerer. Performs a wide variety of tasks with emphasis on constituent tours, general requests, opening and routing mail, and some back-up typing.

Low: $12,000 High: $32,000 Average: $16,600 Normal Range: $14,000 - $20,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$15,800	140	73.3%
2	$17,000	24	12.6%
3 - 4	$20,800	16	8.4%
5 - 6	$20,000	11	5.8%

Average number years: 1.7

84.5% of all offices in our sample employed receptionists, dropping slightly from 90.3% last year. Average salaries for receptionists increased 5.2% since 1985. Turnover in reception positions was a staggering 73% in the last year alone. Experience tells us that many offices hire overly qualified receptionists who will do anything "to get their feet in the door" of congressional offices. Once plugged into the grapevine, these staff often hear of openings in their own or other offices and move up to fill these positions. Five offices reported combining office management duties with those of the Receptionist.

PRESS SECRETARY / COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR -- A Member's publicity director who is responsible for "getting the word out" on Member activities via press releases, radio and T.V. spots, newsletters, newspaper columns, speeches, schedule announcements, etc.

Low: $16,000 High: $71,000 Average: $29,000 Normal Range: $20,000 - $37,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$24,800	65	36.9%
2	$28,100	36	20.4%
3	$30,700	28	15.9%
4 - 5	$30,000	29	16.5%
6+	$36,700	18	10.2%

Average number years: 2.8

176 offices reported that they employed a Press Secretary (77.9% of our sample, compared to 85% last year). Average salaries for press staff increased by 4.3% since 1985. There is a steady graduation in salaries as Press Secretaries gain experience, although the average years in the position is only 2.8. It should be noted that despite the perception that Members are more press conscious than ever due to the importance of television, they allocate relatively modest budget resources to this purpose -- the normal range for a Press Secretary is comparable to that of an Office Manager or Executive Secretary.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT -- We define this vague job title as someone whose principal function is researching legislative/press initiatives.

Low: $12,000 High: $45,000 Average: $18,500 Normal Range: $12,000 - $18,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1 - 2	$16,100	11	73.3%
3 - 6+	$14,500	4	26.7%

Average number years: 1.3

Only 15 offices maintained a position titled Research Assistant (6.6% of respondents). This job title appears headed for extinction. In many offices, Legislative Assistants, Legislative Correspondents and Press Secretaries now handle these responsibilities. Salaries for researchers increased 15.1% since 1985, compensating for the 9.4% decrease suffered in 1985. Only one office reported paying the high $45,000 salary. Research Assistants, the few that are left, only average 1.3 years in their positions. Of the three part time staff reported for this position, one is paid on an hourly basis.

SYSTEMS MANAGER / MAIL MANAGER -- Manages all hardware and software systems used by office. Serves as liaison with vendors and House Information Systems and is responsible for any in-house training. Often is also responsible for all administrative aspects of the correspondence management system, and other administrative systems.

Low: $14,000 High: $36,000 Average: $20,800 Normal Range: $16,000 - $26,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$18,100	43	39.1%
2	$20,200	22	20.0%
3 - 4	$22,300	20	18.2%
5 - 6+	$24,200	25	22.7%

Average number years: 3.1

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110 offices reported employing Systems Managers (48.6% of our sample), compared to 93 offices in 1985 (45.2% of the 1985 sample). This is only the second year this job title is included in the survey, and, as predicted, there is an increase in the numbers reported in this position and a marked 15.4% rise in the average salary. The computer system has become so central to operations in most offices that it was almost inevitable for the trend to move in this direction.

AUTOMATIC TYPEWRITER / COMPUTER OPERATOR -- Sees that all personalized "form letter" responses get out the door. Responsible for coordinating the input and output of names, codes, paragraphs and "robo" letters.

Low: $12,000 High: $30,000 Average: $19,400 Normal Range: $12,000 - $24,000

Years of service	Average salary	Number reported	% Total
1 - 2	$16,500	31	51.7%
3 - 5	$18,400	19	31.7%
6+	$20,900	10	16.7%

Average number years: 3.2

Total Number of Part-Time	Average	High	Low	Normal Range	Average Years
8	8,000	18,000	4,000	5,000-14,000	3.9

Average hours: 17.1/week

Only 60 offices (26.5 of our sample) maintained this position, down from 43.2% in 1985, and 69.8% in 1984. Apparently more offices are designating this staffer as Systems Mangers and giving them the added responsibilities as delineated in that job description. Eight offices reported employing their Computer Operators part-time, with these staffers averaging 17.1 hours per week. Sometimes these staff support a Systems Manger. Often they work in the evenings when the terminals are free. Full-time staff, despite the reduction in their numbers, received a 8.9% pay increase since 1985.

CASEWORKER (WASHINGTON) -- Handles constituent casework: initial problem identification, contacts with agencies, follow-up letters and case resolution.

Low: $14,000 High: $34,000 Average: $24,700 Normal Range: $17,000 - $32,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$17,600	11	20.4%
2	$21,000	4	7.4%
3 - 5	$25,200	20	37.0%
6+	$29,000	19	35.2%

Average number years: 5.1

54 offices employed Washington Caseworkers, 23.9% of our sample, remaining almost constant with 1985 figures. Judging from the fact that 559 caseworkers were reported to be employed in the district, the trend among congressional offices still appears to be to deal with casework at home. 50% of Washington Caseworkers have served in that position for 5 or more years. When they choose to leave or retire, it is very possible that they will be replaced with a caseworker in the district, where it is usually less expensive to support a staffer. Remaining Washington Caseworkers show a 3.42% salary increase as a group, the lowest after the District Clerk.

OFFICE SECRETARY / CLERK (WASHINGTON) -- Handles clerical chores which may include typing, filing, proof-reading, etc.

Low: $5,000 High: $30,000 Average: $17,600 Normal Range: $10,000 - $25,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1 - 2	$13,700	21	58.3%
3 - 5	$18,700	7	19.4%
6+	$25,100	7	19.4%

Average number years: 3.9

36 offices (15.9% of our sample) employ individuals designated solely as secretaries in Washington. Often, secretarial functions are performed by other staffers with different primary responsibilities, frequently by Receptionists. Salaries for Washington Secretaries increased by 3.8%. While Washington Secretaries often perform many of the same functions as Receptionists they have nearly twice the stability of Receptionists, averaging 3.9 years in the position to the Receptionists' 1.7. This may reflect the fact that advertising the position as a secretarial one attracts candidates who are a better match for the clerical functions involved.

APPOINTMENTS SECRETARY / SCHEDULER -- Scheduling for the Member, making appointments and sifting through invitations are this person's main responsibilities, along with other assorted office work.

Low: $15,000 High: $56,000 Average: $24,000 Normal Range: $15,000 - $30,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$17,800	12	22.2%
2 - 3	$21,900	14	25.9%
4 - 5	$22,100	14	25.9%
6+	$28,900	14	25.9%

Average number years: 4.8

54 offices (23.9%) reported this position, continuing to grow from 18.9% in 1985, which in turn was slightly higher than the previous year. Average salaries for this position increased slightly more than 9.6% from 1985. Schedulers, like personal secretaries, are relatively stable staff members, averaging 4.8 years in their positions. Like Personal Secretaries, they often have close ties with the Member and the Member's family.

District Office

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE / FIELD DIRECTOR -- In charge of the District offices. Directs overall district office operation and work flow. Represents the Member with hometown political interests, governmental liaison, citizen action boards, and the public at large.

Low: $18,000 High: $68,000 Average: $35,600 Normal Range: $25,000 - $50,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1 - 2	$32,700	61	31.9%
3 - 5	$34,500	63	33.0%
6+	$40,100	63	33.0%

Average number years: 5.3

Offices reported employing 187 District Representatives/Field Directors (84.5% of our sample), slipping from 102% in 1985. Increases in pay averaged 8.5% since 1985. 63 offices (33% of sample) paid the District Representative an average $40,000 for 6 or more years experience -- by comparison, all A.A.'s averaged over $50,000 regardless of length of time in the position. It seems clear from this information that senior administrative staffers are almost always located in Washington--but then again, it usually costs an awful lot more to live in Washington. The tenure in this position is virtually comparable to that of A.A.'s, who have the greatest average tenure for any major position in congressional offices. This reflects the closeness the District Representative usually feels to the Member and vice-versa. We report below the average salary by district profile. There is surprisingly little variation.

Average Salary by District Demography

URBAN	$35,400
RURAL	$35,100
SUBURBAN	$36,300
MIXED	$36,200

DISTRICT AIDE / FIELD REPRESENTATIVE -- District work under the direction of the District Representative. May be in charge of a satellite district office. Often accompanies Member to district events.

Low: $8,000 High: $48,000 Average: $22,800 Normal Range: $12,000 - $30,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$18,800	80	32.7%
2 - 3	$21,100	66	27.0%
4 - 5	$21,300	44	18.0%
6+	$24,700	54	22.0%

Average number years: 3.9

Total Number of Part-Time	Average	High	Low	Normal Range	Average Years
32	$10,000	$27,000	$2,000	$5,000-15,000	3.0

Average hours: 19.8/wk

Offices reported employing 245 District Aides (108.4% of our sample). Although there was a drop in District Aides--from 125.8% of offices in 1985--salaries leaped 18.9%, probably due to the statistical isolation of part time salaries out of the average. Part-time staffers, 32 reported, earned an average of $10,000 a year, working 19.9 hours per week. This seems to be a fairly popular use for part-time staff probably due to special credentials or political assets they bring to the position. In this position, we see a clearer differential in average salaries by district profile. Generally this parallels the higher cost of living in urban and suburban districts.

Average Salary by District Demography

URBAN	$25,200
RURAL	$21,400
SUBURBAN	$24,900
MIXED	$22,700

FEDERAL GRANTS ASSISTANT / PROJECTS COORDINATOR -- Responsible for obtaining federal financial assistance for the District by assisting local government interests and hometown applicants in obtaining funds. Assistance can include information on programs, deadlines, helpful agency officials, and general clarification of decisions.

Low: $16,000 High: $40,000 Average: $24,200 Normal Range: $17,000 - $34,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$20,500	18	36.0%
2 - 3	$22,200	9	18.0%
4 - 6+	$27,200	22	44.0%

Average number years: 4.0

Only 50 offices reported this position (22.1% of our sample), down from 26.2% last year and 37.6% in 1984. Salaries for these staffers, however, rose 6.6% from 1985 figures. The fact that House Information Systems provides more easily accessed information on federal grants (Grants Information Service) may be making it possible for more offices to incorporate this function into the job description of an L.A., Caseworker or District Representatives and Field Director. State and municipal governments may also be developing more sophisticated capabilites of their own to locate and procure the dwindling number of grants available, reducing the demand for full-time staffing for this position. While we categorize this as a district office position, this is not always the case.

CASEWORKER (DISTRICT) -- Handles constituent casework: initial problem identification, contacts with agencies, follow-up letters and case resolution. (Same as Washington Caseworker except located in the district offices(s).)

Low: $7,000 High: $45,000 Average: $19,400 Normal Range: $14,000 - $25,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$16,400	186	33.3%
2	$17,600	66	11.8%
3	$19,400	76	13.6%
4	$18,000	50	8.9%
5	$19,400	45	8.0%
6+	$22,400	136	24.3%

Average number years: 4.0

Total Number of Part-Time	Average	High	Low	Normal Range	Average Years
38	$11,000	$29,000	$4,000	7,000-15,000	3.8

Average Hours: 21.3/wk

The 226 responding offices reported a total of 559 district-based caseworkers (247% of our sample -- that is, there are usually 2 or 3 caseworkers on each district staff). This figure dropped slightly from the 571 reported in 1985. Average salaries increased 6% since 1985. However, average salaries lagged behind those of the 1 out of 10 caseworkers still found in Washington by nearly $5,300. This wage gap probably reflects higher living costs in Washington, D.C., and the broader experience and longer tenure usually found in Washington Caseworkers. 38 part-time District Caseworkers were reported, earning an average of $11,000 and working 21 hours a week, almost "perfectly" part-time. Both part-time and full-time staff average nearly four years in the position. Seven offices reported employing more than four caseworkers; the average salary for caseworkers in these offices is $17,000 - $2,000 less than offices with four or less District Caseworkers. Of course, other district staff such as secretaries may also include some casework in their job description. Once again, there is surprisingly little variation in salary by district profile.

Average Salary by District Demography

URBAN	$19,700
RURAL	$19,200
SUBURBAN	$19,800
MIXED	$19,500

OFFICE SECRETARY / CLERK (DISTRICT) -- Handles clerical chores which may include typing, filing, proof-reading, etc.

Low: $8,000 High: $28,000 Average: $15,600 Normal Range: $10,000 - $20,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1	$13,900	69	41.3%
2 - 4	$14,700	52	31.2%
5 - 6+	$17,900	44	26.3%

Average number years: 3.4

167 offices (73.% of respondents) maintained this position. This function is performed by part-time employees in only 10 offices. The full-time salary average is slightly above the national average for the lowest grade of secretary ($15,285).[5] Salaries only averaged 1.9% higher than their 1985 levels --in real terms a step backwards from, and considerably below, the middle grade into which most secretaries fall. We do see a clear distinction here in salary levels by district profile.

Average Salary by District Demography

URBAN	$17,400
RURAL	$14,000
SUBURBAN	$16,800
MIXED	$14,900

MOBILE OFFICE OPERATOR -- Holds office hours throughout the District in a van, Tailor, etc. May perform casework solicited in this manner.

Low: $12,000 High: $42,000 Average: $22,300 Normal Range: $12,000 - $31,000

Years of Service	Average Salary	Number Reported	% Total
1 - 5	$15,800	5	35.7%
6+	$25,900	9	64.3%

Average number years: 6.8

Only 14 offices reported operating a mobile office in the home district (6.2% of our sample), down from 17 offices last year (8.2%). For those Mobile Office Operators still left, they enjoy the greatest longevity among Hill staff with an average of close to 7 years service. Salaries increased a whopping 28%, the highest raise reported by this survey. Due to the smallness of the sample, just a few adjustments can dramatically affect the average. Although the low salary for Mobile Office Operators remained the same from 1985, the high end of the range jumped from $23,000 to $31,000. Five Mobile Office Operators reported this year earned above the 1985 $23,000 high salary.

Footnotes:

[1]Mike Causey, "Salary Raises Studied," The Washington Post, Jul. 30, 1987, p. D2.

[2]Matt Yancey, "Average Pay Climbed 4% During 1986," The Washington Post, n.d., p. F1.

[3]Causey, p. D2.

[4]Susan Webb Hammond, "Legislative Staffs," Legislative Studies Quarterly IX (May 1984), 271-307.

[5]Causey, p. D2.

STAFF BENEFITS SURVEY

SUMMARY
1987

CMF STAFF BENEFITS SURVEY RESULTS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The following are the results of the second survey CMF has conducted of congressional office staff benefits. The original survey was conducted in 1985. While generally following the same format as the original study, we have added a breakdown of the maximum accrual of vacation days to this report. In addition to reporting the results for each question or group of questions, we have also attempted to provide some relevant comparative data from the federal executive agencies and the private sector. We have made every effort towards accuracy in this comparative data and trust it will hold up under the scrutiny of those more experienced in agency regulations and private sector practices.

Some of the key points we have ascertained in our survey are:

* 46% of congressional offices do not automatically pass on COLA's to the staff.

* 68% of congressional offices have a merit raise system in place. This is down from 77% reporting a merit raise system in 1985. The decrease is possibly explained by the belt tightening which occurred in 1986 after the Gramm-Rudman bill and subsequent uncertainties regarding legislative appropriations.

* The base number of paid vacation days in congressional offices (2-3 weeks for 76% of offices) is comparable to the federal bureaucracy (13 days) and surpasses the private sector (10 days or less for 92%).

* 57% of congressional offices allow additional vacation time for staff with tenure in the office, while all federal agency employees get additional paid vacation after 3 years. This represents a significant increase from the 43% which reported this practice in 1985 and may represent a trend to finding alternative ways of rewarding tenure and performance when budget dollars for raises are scarce. Approximately 90% of private sector employees receive additional paid vacation as they build tenure, but for many this still means at least 5 years service before they receive vacation time comparable to that of most congressional staff.

* A scant 14% of congressional offices credit experience in other Hill offices towards increased vacation benefits and less than half (39%) permit unused vacation time accrued within their own office to be carried over to the following year. Federal employees can move anywhere within the bureaucracy while maintaining increased vacation benefits based on tenure and can accrue 30 days unused annual leave for carry-over.

* Only 40% of congressional offices have an official sick-leave policy,

typical of the relative informality of "small businesses." 85% of those with an official policy allow 15 days or less.

* 40% of congressional offices have an official policy for paid maternity leave, with 85% allowing 6 weeks or longer. Employees in the federal agencies have no such benefit and must use their sick leave or annual leave to draw pay.

* 60% of congressional offices maintain their staff policies in written form. This percentage is higher among newer offices, but veteran offices reported a 10% rise from 1985.

* 20% of congressional offices report difficulty finding applicants with Hill experience given the salary and benefits offered. These offices might find the office policies of their colleagues useful in attracting the personnel they desire.

(1) Are Cost-of-Living-Adjustments which are received automatically passed on to the staff?

No. Offices Reporting: 226

	Yes	No
Overall	54%	46%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or less	41%	59%
3 - 6 Terms	54%	46%
7 Terms or More	72%	28%

As with 1985, there's a close split between offices who have a policy of automatically passing on COLA's to their staffs and those who don't. However, this year the tables swing to more offices automatically granting COLA's than not, which is possibly because in 1987 congressional offices received COLA's and in 1985 did not. The number of veteran offices passing COLA's on jumped dramatically from 53% to 72%. Freshman offices were just starting up when the last COLA was made and they did not experience the COLA money as an increase; this probably accounts for the low number of "2 terms or less" offices which reported automatically passing on COLA's to staff.

Comparison: In the federal agencies, of course, COLA's are always passed on to employees. In the private sector, in companies which employ more than 1000 employees, 53% of the employees are guaranteed a COLA review each year.[6]

(2) Do you have a merit raise system?

No. Offices Reporting: 222

	Yes	No
Overall	68%	32%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or less	62%	38%
3-6 Terms	72%	28%
7 Terms or More	64%	36%

(2A) Do you have a merit bonus system?

No. Offices Reporting: 220

	Yes	No
Overall	52%	48%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	54%	46%
3-6 Terms	57%	43%
7 Terms or More	37%	63%

First, we should note that our survey question term "merit bonus" may need clarification. "Merit bonus" normally includes the concept of special reward for outstanding performance which occurs over a short or long period. While we cannot state with certainty how this term was interpreted by responding offices, we should note that House regulations require that pay be commensurate with duties performed each month. Any merit-based bonus system would need to be consistent with this regulation. It must also be remembered that congressional offices cannot spend in excess of 10% of the full year's clerk hire allowance in any one month. This is also a limiting factor on the merit-based bonus system. 14% more offices reported giving merit bonuses than did in our 1985 survey, and 9% fewer offices reported giving merit raises. This is probably explained by the uncertainty of clerk-hire allowances which will be available in the Gramm-Rudman era---it may appear safer to award bonuses when clerk-hire funds are available, rather than commit to higher salaries in succeeding years. This is counter balanced, however, by the basic need for a system of raises to retain talented staff, leaving merit-raises the more common policy even in difficult times. Some offices, obviously, use both merit raises and bonuses. Veteran offices award merit-based bonuses less frequently than their newer colleagues. This is probably explained by the fact that there is often a core staff in veteran offices that has been with the office since the Member's first election. These staffers probably received merit pay increases when money was available. Their relatively high salaries may limit the flexibility the office has to pass on further merit compensation to them or to new staff.

Comparison: The federal agencies categorize employees two ways: as non-merit pay employees and merit pay employees. Merit employees occupy a grade 13 through 15 position and "have supervisory responsibilities or make decisions or recommendations which substantially impact the management of his or her unit." Increases in pay within their grade are based primarily on performance. Non-merit pay employees also must perform at an "acceptable" level of competence in order to receive a within-grade increase. Traditionally, they received the increase more often as a function of time served as an employee. As of 1985, their pay increases are more closely tied to performance per the new "Performance Management System" regulations. There are also cash awards for good performance within one's job description for both types of employees and special cash awards for suggestions or accomplishments outside one's job description.

(3) Do you have an official policy for amount of vacation time allowed?

No. Office Reporting: 226

	Yes	No
Overall	97%	3%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	98%	2%
3-6 Terms	97%	3%
7 Terms or More	93%	7%

(3A) If yes, what is the minimum amount of vacation time all staff are entitled to?

	1 wk 5 days	2 wks/ 10 days	12-14 days	3 wks/ 15 days	16-19 days	4 wks/ 20 days	5wks 25 days	Other
Overall	6%	36%	11%	29%	2%	10%	2%	4%
Breakdown								
2 Terms or Less	8%	42%	12%	23%	-	5%	5%	6%
3-6 Terms	3%	33%	12%	33%	3%	14%	-	2%
7 Terms or More	14%	35%	5%	28%	2%	9%	2%	4%

3B) Do staff with longer tenure in your office get additional vacation time?

No. Offices Reporting: 221

	Yes	No
Overall	57%	43%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	57%	43%
3-6 Terms	52%	48%
7 Terms or More	67%	33%

(3C) Do staff with longer tenure on the Hill, though not accumulated in your office, get additional vacation time?

No. Offices Reporting: 217

	Yes	No
Overall	14%	86%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	19%	81%
3-6 Terms	9%	91%
7 Terms or More	19%	81%

(3D) Can unused vacation time in one year be accrued and used the following year?

No. Offices Reporting: 222

	Yes	No
Overall	39%	61%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	32%	68%
3-6 Terms	41%	59%
7 Terms or More	42%	58%

3E) If time can be accrued, what is the maximum accrual allowed?

No. Offices Reporting: 86

	1wk	2wk/ 10 days	4wks/ 20 days	5wks/ 25 days	6wks/ 30 days	No Set Amount	Other
Overall	14%	9%	6%	2%	6%	50%	12%
Breakdown							
2 Terms or Less	5%	5%	14%	5%	23%	33%	14%
3-6 Terms	17%	13%	2%	2%	-	54%	11%
7 Terms or Less	16%	5%	5%	-	5%	58%	10%

* Responses not falling within preset categories.

Nearly all congressional offices report having an official policy on vacation time. Not surprisingly, the large majority (76%) have policies which fall within the typical 2-3 weeks (10 to 15 days) paid vacation time model. However, 10% do allow a generous 4 weeks (20 days). 2% allow 5 weeks (25 days) vacation time in addition to sick leave. A little over half of congressional offices (57%), up from 43% in 1985, allow more vacation time to staff with tenure in the office, but only 14% grant extra time to staff with Hill service, though not with the present office. The majority of offices (61%) do not allow unused vacation time to be accrued from one year to the next. Veteran offices (42%) permit this practice more often than freshman offices (32%). For the first time, we asked offices to report the number of vacation days staff are permitted to accrue. Of the 86 offices reporting that time can be accrued, only 50% reported any maximum figure. The offices not reporting any preset maximums most probably support flexible accrual policies. A few offices commented that they had no maximum at all, or that time could only be accrued within the same Congress or up to a special point in the calendar year. Some offices follow the GS schedule for vacation accrual. 23% of the offices reporting an accrual policy allow a maximum accrual of 1-2 weeks (5-10 days).

Comparison: The federal executive agencies have an annual leave system in which an employee earns 4 hours of leave per pay period. This translates to 13 days per year. Federal employees with 3 to 14 years tenure earn 6 hours per pay period, or the equivalent of 20 days in a year. For 15 years or more service, 8 hours per pay period is awarded, or 26 days. Of course, the employee with tenure retains the right to these increased levels of leave regardless of whether he or she is transferred to another department or agency.

Most federal agency employees may accumulate and carry over up to 240 hours (30 days) of annual leave from one year to the next. Annual leave accumulated in excess of this is forfeited, with some exceptions made for extenuating circumstances.[7]

In the private sector, firms are less generous, as a rule, than the federal bureaucracy. The following is a chart distilled from a survey of medium and large firms (generally at least 100 employees) in 1984.[8]

Number of Years Service	Number of Days Vacation Time			
	5 days	10 days	15 days	20 days
1 year of service	30%	62%	3%	-
3 years of service	4%	80%	5%	1%
5 years of service	1%	47%	42%	1%
10 years of service		6%	68%	15%
15 years of service		3%	28%	60%

(Numbers do not equal 100% as we have not reported the small percentages which fell between these blocks, such as 11-14 days).

Figures on policies regarding accumulation and carry-over policies of vacation time in the private sector are not available.

N.B. Further information on leave guidelines is available to congressional offices in the U.S. House of Representatives Congressional Handbook (prepared by the Committee on House Administration).

(4) Do you have an official policy for number of paid sick days granted to staff?

No. of Offices Reporting: 225

	Yes	No
Overall	40%	60%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	52%	48%
3-6 Terms	36%	64%
7 Terms or More	33%	67%

(4A) If yes, how many days are allowed?

	9 or Less	10	12	13-15	16-20	As needed
Overall	27%	18%	22%	18%	2%	13%
Breakdown						
2 Terms or Less	38%	9%	24%	18%	-	12%
3-6 Terms	20%	24%	20%	20%	-	17%
7 Terms or More	20%	20%	27%	13%	13%	7%

(4B) Are staff with longer tenure entitled to additional sick leave?

	Yes	No
Overall	5%	95%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	5%	95%
3-6 Terms	5%	95%
7 Terms or More	7%	93%

Only 40% of offices have an official policy for number of paid days of sick leave. We assume that, for the rest, some paid days of sick leave are allowed but official policy as to how much has not been set. Given the relatively small size of congressional offices, such informality is not surprising. In those offices where sick leave policy is formalized, nearly half allow 10 days or less, another 40% allow 12-15 days and 13% allow as much time as needed. Veteran offices, as reported in 1985, feel the least need to set such policy. Apparently, when a core staff works together over the years, the office grows confident that generous sick leave policies won't be abused. Several offices reported granting sick leave on an as needed, "when you're sick, you're sick basis," provided the privilege is not abused. A very few offices combine sick leave with vacation time; i.e., they allow a set number of days which can be used for either vacation or sick leave.

Almost no one sees a need to allow more sick leave for staff with greater tenure.

Comparison: Employees of the federal agencies earn four hours of sick leave for each pay period -- or 13 days per year, regardless of length of service.

In a private sector survey of medium and large-size firms it was found that 92% of white collar employees were provided sick leave. Of these, nearly two thirds were allowed a specified number of sick days annually in contrast with systems which provide a specified number of days per disability. Under both plans, length of service is taken into consideration. Below is a summary of the amount of paid sick leave allowed under annual plans to white collar workers:[9]

Private Sector/Paid Sick Leave Policy

Provide sick leave	92%
Provide annual sick leave	64%

Amount of Annual Sick Leave Provided	Professional and Administrative Employees
At 1 year service	
5-9 days	15%
10-29 days	34%
30-59 days	5%
60-119 days	4%
120 days +	4%
At 5 year service	
5-9 days	12%
10-29 days	22%
30-59 days	10%
60-119 days	12%
120 days +	7%
At 10 years service	
5-9 days	12%
10-29 days	21%
30-59 days	6%
60-119 days	12%
120 + days	13%

Clearly, in contrast to the federal government and most congressional offices, a significant segment of the private sector links allowed sick leave to employee tenure.

(5) Do you have an official policy for paid maternity leave?

No. of Offices Reporting: 223

	Yes	No
Overall	40%	60%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	29%	71%
3-6 Terms	44%	56%
7 Terms or More	44%	56%

(5A) If yes, how much maternity leave is granted?

	2-4 wks	6 wks	8-10 wks	3 Months/ 12 wks	As Needed	Other
Overall	9%	26%	30%	11%	16%	8%
Breakdown						
2 Terms or Less	5%	11%	32%	5%	32%	16%
3-6 Terms	12%	34%	30%	12%	6%	6%
7 Terms or Less	5%	20%	30%	15%	25%	5%

(5B) Do you have an official policy for paid paternity leave?

No. of Offices Reporting: 222

	Yes	No
Overall	14%	86%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	14%	86%
3-6 Terms	13%	88%
7 Terms or More	20%	80%

(5C) If yes, how much paternity leave is granted?

	1 wk	2 wks	3-4 wks	6 wks	2-3 Months 8-12 wks	As Needed	Other
Overall	13%	16%	6%	13%	13%	31%	9%
Breakdown							
2 Terms or Less (9 offices)	22%	11%	-	-	22%	33%	11%
3-6 Terms (14 offices)	14%	29%	14%	21%	-	21%	-
7 Terms or More (9 offices)	-	-	-	11%	22%	44%	22%

Although there were minimal rises in the numbers of office granting maternity and paternity leave (up from 36% to [illegible]% for maternity and 12% to 14% for paternity), official policies on maternity and paternity leave are the exception rather than the norm. The low positive response rate may reflect the fact that in such small offices (an average of 14.3 staffers per office), no staff member may yet have become pregnant. That is, there has as yet been no practical need for a policy. One office commented that in its 10 years in Congress, there had not been a pregnant staff member, but that they would certainly give reasonable leave time should the situation arise. Newer offices have had even less time to encounter this event which probably explains why significantly fewer 2 term or less offices report having a maternity leave policy than do older offices. When they do have a maternity leave policy it tends to be more generous than the policy in older offices.

Where maternity leave policy does exist, it is typically set at 6 weeks to 2 months. We are pleased to report that the number of offices with maternity leave policies of 4 weeks or less has dropped from 19% in 1985 to 9% this year. Paternity leave policy is so rare that we've indicated the number of offices in each tenure-group on which the percentages are based. Typically, offices with a paternity leave policy grant 1-2 weeks, or "as needed" (offices offering paternity leave "as needed" occasionally deduct such leave from vacation or sick leave). A handful of offices reported their maternity leave policies as not giving extra leave time, but instead combining sick leave and vacation time; when this time is used, the leave status becomes "Leave without pay." One office reported "we also have adoption leave."

Comparisons: The federal agencies make no provision for paid maternity leave beyond the use of available sick leave, annual leave time, or the taking of leave without pay. Similarly is there no provision for paternity leave other than the use of annual leave or leave without pay.[10]

The private sector (384 Fortune 1500 companies) report a varied and changing picture on this subject.[11] The 1978 Pregnancy Discrimination Act ruled that company short term disability policy must treat pregnancy and childbirth as it would any other disability. 95% of companies surveyed had a short-term

disability policy for child-bearing mothers which provided full pay (39%) or partial pay (57%). Few offered paid leave as an alternative or in addition to this, except if it was deducted from vacation time. The length of disability leave is determined by medical opinion, not company policy, but ran 5-8 weeks in 63% of the companies and 9-12 weeks in 32% of the companies. Likewise, only a very few companies offered paid paternity leave, except as deducted against vacation time.

Unpaid leave is offered to female employees by 52% of the companies. 37% of corporations offer unpaid leave to male employees (up from only 8.6% in 1980, reflecting the change in thinking on this issue). Unpaid leave policy is as follows:

	Female	Male
1-4 weeks	29%	36%
2-3 months	36%	29%
4-6 months	28%	25%
7 months - 1 year	7%	10%

However, this same survey revealed that men rarely take advantage of this policy, though women do utilize it. Additionally, the survey found that 60% of the companies allowed women to return to work on a part-time basis for a period, after completing the leave period.

A study conducted of 1000 small and medium sized firms reported, in comparison, that only 40% of working women received any paid disability leave. Employees in smaller companies are less likely to receive disability benefits.[12]

(6) Are your staff benefit policies written down?

No. of Offices Reporting: 221

	Yes	No
Overall	60%	40%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	68%	32%
3-6 Terms	58%	42%
7 Terms or More	51%	49%

A majority of offices do have written policies, and, clearly, they are becoming more prevalent among the newer offices. 10% more 7 term + offices maintain written office policies than did so in 1985.

Of course, the federal agencies' policies are fully codified and published. The same is usually true in the larger private sector firms.

(7) Is it difficult to find job applicants with Hill experience who will work for the salary and benefits you can offer them?

No. of Offices Reporting: 214

	Yes	No
Overall	20%	80%
Breakdown		
2 Terms or Less	18%	82%
3-6 Terms	24%	76%
7 Terms or More	12%	88%

The large majority of offices are not experiencing significant difficulty with hiring staff members with Hill experience within their offices salary and benefits guidelines. Even less offices reported difficulty this year than did in the 1985 survey (20% vs. 24%). This is particularly true of two term or less offices (18% reporting problems vs. 26% in 1985). This attests to the highly competitive job-seeking atmosphere on Capitol Hill, especially during an election year. It may be useful for those that are experiencing difficulty to review the norms both in the Salary Section of this survey and in the Benefits Section to determine if they need to amend or clarify their office's policies to make them more comparable and attractive.

Footnotes

[6] "Major Collective Bargaining Settlements in Private Industry" 7/2/85

[7] Employee Handbook, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1983.

[8] Employee Benefits in Medium and Large Firms, 1984, U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, June 1985 Bulletin 2237, Table 7.

[9] Ibid. Table 13.

[10] Employee Handbook.

[11] "Preliminary Report on a Nationwide Survey of Maternity/Parental Leaves," Catalyst Career and Family Center, NY, NY.

[14] "Family and Medical Leave Act of 1986", 99th Congress, Second Session. Report #99-699-part 2.

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